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History of S. Carolina.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF THE Early Settlement of South Carolina.

BY REV. ROBERT LATHAN.

BATTLE OF WILLIAMSON'S, OR CAPT. HUYCK'S DEFEAT.

So soon as the facts concerning the fall of Charleston reached the up-country, the tories laid aside all disguise and began boldly to plunder in bands. To inspire these loyalists with greater courage and to incite them to acts of greater daring, the British stationed numbers of soldiers in different sections of the State. We have seen that the Whigs of that part of North Carolina bordering on South Carolina, were thoroughly aroused. On the 20th of June, 1780, Colonel Locke engaged Moore and Welch at Ramsour's Mill and discomfited them.

Tarleton's cruelty at Waxhaw kindled into a flame the patriotism of all the region round about Charlotte, North Carolina. It had the same effect upon the Scotch-Irish of Fairfield, Chester and York counties, South Carolina. Few, if any of the Scotch Irish of the territory embraced in these counties were paroled as prisoners, and none of them took British protection. Many of them left their homes and sought refuge with kindred spirits in less exposed regions. At different points the tories had begun to collect as early as the latter part of May. They were a set of plundering thieves, utterly unfit to add strength or give dignity to any government; but fully competent to give great annoyance to all good citizens.

On the 24th of May, 1780, Captain John McLure, with a few of his Whig neighbors, attacked Houseman, a tory Captain, at Beckhamville, Chester county, and routed him and his band. Two days after, Captains Bratton and McLure attacked a similar band at Mobley's Meeting House, on Little river, Fairfield county. These bold attacks on the tories aroused the British, and they determined to avenge the blood of their tory friends.

At this time Colonel Turnbull was in command of a British post at Rocky Mount. To chastise the patriots for past acts of daring, and to keep them in awe in the future, Col. Turnbull sent out Captain Huyck with two hundred British regulars, one hundred dragoons, one hundred mounted infantry and about five hundred tories—in all near one thousand men. Capt. Huyck's headquarters was, for some time, in the neighborhood of what is now Alexander Williford's mill, on Fishing creek, in Chester county.

Captain Christian Huyck was a tory, a lawyer, and by birth a native of Philadelphia. The most remarkable feature in his character was that he was a most blasphemously profane swearer.

From this encampment on Fishing creek, Huyck sent out plundering and burning parties, daily, in all directions. In Huyck's command was a man by the name of Ferguson, a Colonel of the tory militia. Most of the plundering was assigned to this officer. The houses of the Whigs, for miles all around, were plundered, and not a few of the houses of those who were regarded as prominent Whigs, were burned; and Ferguson and his men went so far as even to shoot down, in cold blood, unoffending citizens. On Sabbath morning, the 11th of June, Captain Huyck sent a party of men to Fishing Creek Church, of which the Rev. John Simpson was pastor. Huyck had two grudges against the Rev. Simpson and his congregation. The one was because Mr. Simpson had been prominent in planning the attack by McLure upon Houseman at Beckhamville. For the encouragement he gave Captain John McLure, Huyck and Ferguson determined that Mr. Simpson should be punished severely. The other grudge that these officers had against the Rev. Simpson and his congregation, was that they were Presbyterians and continued to sing in worship to God the same version of the Psalms used by the Scotch. So great was the hatred of these men to the Scotch translation of the Psalms, that they went through the country and consigned to the flames every Bible which contained the Scotch metrical version of the Psalms. The object of the visit of the British to Fishing Creek Church on the 11th of June was to burn church, pastor and people all together. On arriving at the church they found no one there. Either there was to be no preaching there that day, or the congregation, for prudential reasons, had assembled at some other point. The disappointment of the plunderers was great, but they determined not to be out-done. The house of the pastor was but a short distance from the church. On they went to his house. He was not at home; he had gone on Fridqy to join Sumter at Clem's branch. So soon as Mrs. Simpson saw them coming she took her four children, and as well as she could, concealed herself and her children in the orchard. The British entered the house, first plundered it of everything they wanted, and took out the beds and ripped them open, throwing away the feathers and taking the ticks. This done, the dwelling house and pastor's study, were set on fire and away they went. On the same Sabbath morning, they found a pious young man by the name of William Strong, quietly reading his Bible. Him Ferguson, either in person or by his direction, shot. The mother of Captain John McLure, a widow, lived in the same community. Her house these tories also burned. Sometime before this, perhaps about the 1st of June, a party having been sent out on one of these plundering and burning expeditions, had burned Colonel William Hill's Iron Works on Allison's creek, York county, S. C. On their way to accomplish this deed, they burned the barn of Mr. Simril and perpetrated other foul and wicked deeds. The country, for many miles all around Union Church, was constantly full of these plunderers.

At this time, General Sumter was at Clem's branch, in the upper corner of Lancaster county. His place of rendezvous became known to the refugees from the upper section of South Carolina. To him they flocked, and it was not long until the nucleus of a little army was formed.

On the west side of the Catawba, the patriots were not idle. Edward Lacey, John McLure, William Bratton, John Mills and many others, were busily engaged in gathering up the patriots of York and Chester counties. The patriots readily joined these men, and it was only a short time until four hundred men were ready for service. These were, at this time, nearly all the fighting men in the two counties. It was now determined to drive Huyck and Ferguson from the county. About the time that Lacey, Bratton and McLure determined to drive Huyck's forces from the Fishing creek region, Colonels Hill and Neil were sent over the Catawba, to beat up recruits for Sumter's army, then forming on Clem's branch. When Hill and Neil heard that Bratton, Lacey and McLure had determined to attack Huyck and Ferguson, they at once concluded to join in with these patriots. Hill and Neil had one hundred and thirty-three men. A junction was formed and the united forces amounted to more than five hundred men. It was determined to attack Huyck and Ferguson during the night of the 11th of July at White's, now Williford's mill. It was concerted that Captain McLure and a party under him, should be sent out, during the day, to reconnoitre, and that the whole force should be in the neighborhood before dark. About sundown all arrived within a few hundred yards of the mill, and having tied their horses in the woods, without any commander, arranged themselves into platoons of six and commenced to march for Huyck's camp. Just at this moment the first platoon, in which was Lacey, was met by McLure and his reconnoitering party, who told them that Huyck had decamped during the day, and had gone to what is now Brattonville, ten miles South of Yorkville. A consultation was held by the leading spirits, and it was determined to follow Huyck and Ferguson and attack them that night, as they were distant only about fifteen miles. The word was given, "March to your horses." Some of those who had not learned that the enemy was gone, supposing that the command, "march to your horses," meant "retreat," rushed, with all possible speed to their horses, and so great was the effect upon the minds of one hundred and fifty, that having mounted their horses, they never stopped till they reached Charlotte, North Carolina. So soon as the facts in the case were learned, everything became quiet and another consultation was held. It was again determined to make an attack upon the British and tories before morning. They had only three hundred and fifty men. They set out on Huyck's trail and had no difficulty in following it. Colonel Lacey's father lived only a few miles from Bratton's, where it was thought the enemy was encamped. As was not uncommon in the Revolutionary war, old Lacey was an uncompromising loyalist, and so was his son Reuben; but his son Edward was as uncompromising a Whig. Edward Lacey knew that his father, if he learned that the Whigs were about to attack the British, would be sure to go to the British camp and announce the fact. To prevent this, Edward Lacey sent a detail of four men to guard his father until morning, and as he knew his father to be both a shrewd and determined man, he gave them permission to tie him. The guard finding that the old man could be controlled in no other way, did actually tie him, and thus prevented him from frustrating the plans of his son and the other patriots.

Having arrived in the neighborhood of Bratton's, Colonel Edward Lacey and Capt. John Mills, the grandfather of Thomas S. Mills, of Chesterville, were sent out to learn the exact position of the enemy's camp. They learned that Reuben Lacey, the brother of Colonel Edward Lacey, had gone, the evening before, to the British camp. Edward knew that his brother was an early riser and that he would be certain to return home in the morning before daylight. The two scouts, Mills and Lacey, placed themselves near by the road which they knew Reuben Lacey would be obliged to travel in returning home. Here they waited quietly his return. Edward Lacey was right in his conjecture. Before day, Reuben came along. He was blind of one eye, and what was somewhat remarkable, he rode a horse that was blind of one eye, and he had a dog which was blind of one eye. This dog followed him everywhere he went. So soon as blind Reuben, on his blind horse, followed by his blind dog, came nearly opposite to the place occupied by Edward Lacey and John Mills, he was accosted by Mills, in a feigned voice, with the demand, "Who comes there?"

"A friend."

"A friend of whom?"

"Of the British."

"So are we; where is the camp?"

"At Williamson's, two miles ahead."

"Where are the sentinels posted?"

"One is north of Williamson's, on the road, at the branch; another is half way between Bratton's and Williamson's; one about one hundred yards south of Williamson's house; and another is east of Williamson's, towards the creek."

This was all that the scouts desired to know. They bid blind Reuben Lacey good morning, and hastened to communicate the important information to their comrades. The plan of attack was soon determined on. The whole force was divided into two divisions; one to be led by Bratton and Neil, and the other to be led by Edward Lacey. Bratton and Neil were to lead their men up the road which passed by Williamson's house, whilst Lacey was to lead his men down the same road. The divisions were to meet at Williamson's. James Moore, understanding the locality, acted as guide for Lacey. At the branch the sentinel was found posted, but was asleep. Samuel Williamson, the son of James Williamson, at whose house Huyck and Ferguson were encamped, shot the sentinel down. This was the first man killed in the fight, and it occurred on the morning of the 12th of July, 1780. The British and tories, under Huyck and Ferguson, had, on the evening before, come to the house of Colonel William Bratton, and ordered Mrs. Martha Bratton to prepare supper for them. Mrs. Bratton's first thought was to prepare them a sumptuous repast, but to poison the food and thus exterminate all who might partake of her dainties. She had the poison in the house; but when the time came to make use of it, she refrained from the desperate act, lest she might do more harm than good.

Whilst supper was preparing, Huyck [illegible] John Bratton, the father of a large family, many of whom are residents of York county. Huyck asked Mrs. Bratton where her husband was? She replied, "In Sumter's army." Huyck told her if she would send for him and induce him to join the British, he should have a commission in the regular army. This offer Mrs. Bratton treated with indignity, telling him she would rather her husband would fight the British and tories than to fight with or for them. Huyck became enraged and dashed the child from his knees, and an ill-bred soldier seized a sickle which was near by, and with it was about to cut the throat of the brave woman. He was only prevented from perpetrating this savage deed by the officer second in command to Huyck. After supper, their camp was formed at Williamson's, less than half a mile from Bratton's. The road ran by Williamson's house on the east. The house and yard were fenced up. The British and tories were inside of this enclosure. Just as day began to dawn, the patriots began the attack on the north and east of the house. They were only about seventy-five yards from where the British and tories were lying, sound asleep in their tents. It was a complete surprise. They suspected no harm. When the firing first commenced, Huyck woke up, but thought it was only some straggling patriots who had stolen in upon his camp and that the whole thing would be over as soon as the British regulars poured in one volley. With this impression on his mind, he turned over to finish his morning nap. Still the firing continued. In haste he rose from his bed, put on his shoes and pants and ran out without a coat, and commenced to ride back and forward along his line. Thomas Carroll, who lived and died on Toole's fork, near the present residence of Dr. Calvin P. Sandifer, seeing him and regarding him as of more than ordinary importance, rested his gun in the fork of a plum tree, saying to his companions near by: "I am going to try that fellow on horseback in his shirt sleeves, and if I kill him you will know it, for I have two balls in my gun." He fired, the man fell, and after the battle was over, Huyck was found dead with two bullet holes in his head, one only a short distance above the other.

Before Huyck rose from his bed, Ferguson had attempted to drive the patriots away by the bayonet, but he failed. They fought behind the fence which surrounded the house, and were not exposed. Ferguson and his British regulars were forced to give way before the murderous fire of the patriots. So soon as it was learned by the British and tories that Huyck had fallen, they became confused. The patriots were not long in making this discovery, and the command was given: "Boys, take the fence and every man his own commander!" No sooner was the order given than it was executed. Over the fence the Whigs leaped, and were, in a moment, right among the British and tories. The cry for quarters soon became universal. Even Ferguson raised his voice and pleaded for mercy. This could not be granted, because it was known that either by him, or by his orders, William Strong was shot in his own house on the 11th of June. Ferguson was killed on the spot. The British and tory force was scattered to the winds. Near forty were left on the battle ground, amongst which number was the profane Huyck and the cruel Ferguson. About fifty were wounded; at least fifty were found wounded on the battle-field, and others, wounded, fled, but afterwards perished in the woods. How many were taken prisoners is not known; but the officer second in command was amongst the number, and his life was spared on account of the entreaties of Mrs. Bratton, whose life he had saved on the previous evening. The conflict lasted about one hour; and strange to say, only one Whig, whose name was Campbell, was killed.

On the evening before the battle, whilst at Bratton's house, Captain Huyck sent James McRanell, Thomas Clendenin, Robert Bratton, Charles Curry and John Moore—all old men—to a crib, there to be guarded, during the night. When the battle began, the old men rose upon their guard, and when John Moore, jr., went, during the fight, to release the old men, he found them guarding the guard which had been placed over them.

The wounded British and tories were sent to the houses of the loyal families in the neighborhood, and waited upon by Dr. Turner, who resided in the community.

The sword of Huyck fell to the lot of Thomas Carroll. No doubt he received this as a reward for having killed the vile swearer. In his old age, Thomas Carroll became very much doted. One of the strange acts of his old age was, even when he was near ninety-five years old, to buckle on the sword of Huyck, and by the assistance of his sons, John and Joseph, mount a fine black horse which he owned, and flourish his sword as if he were a great military captain in the bloom of youth.

Immediately before the battle commenced, Colonel Bratton, knowing his house was on the battle-ground, and that his family would be exposed to the fire from the Whigs as well as the British, desired to go and inform his wife, that she might protect herself and family. Colonel Lacy, who was a most impetuous creature, and at the same time a powerful man, physically, swore that if he dared to do such a thing it might frustrate all the plans of the Whigs, and he would run his sword through him if he attempted such a thing.

Bratton did not go to inform his wife of her danger; but when the firing commenced, Mrs. Bratton placed her little son in the chimney as a place of safety. A ball struck the opposite jamb and bounded back. This the little fellow secured as a keepsake.

The house in which Colonel Bratton was living is still standing. It is said the timbers still contain bullets that were shot at the time of the battle. It is still owned by a descendant of Colonel William Bratton.

The battles of Ramsour's Mill and Williamson's were productive of great good to the cause of the Whigs. They stopped, at least for a time, the plundering of the tories, and taught the patriots that they might dare to meet British regulars.

It would be interesting to see a full list of the names of those who were at the battle of Williamson's and Huyck's defeat. This might once have been secured. It is now too late. We give below the names of the actors on that memorable morning, that we have been able to gather up. As there was really no commanding officer, but each man was his own commander, and as numbers of the individuals distinguished themselves during the war and were promoted, we give simply the names without any title:

John McLure, James McLure, William Bratton, Hugh Bratton, Thomas Bratton, Thomas Carroll, John Moffett, John Nixon, James Moore, James Hemphill, James Mitchell, John McConnell, John Chambers, Jas. Wallace, William Guy, Andrew Love, Chas. Curry, John Kidd, Alexander Moore, Wm. Moore, John Moore and his four sons, John, Samuel, William and Nathan, Robert Howie, David Leech, John Carson, William Hanna, James Hanna, William Davidson, Edward Lacey, John Mills, William Burris, Richard Wynn, John Miller, John Swann, James Ross, William Ross, Charles Miles, Robert Ashe, James McElwee, John Smith, Peter Wylie, Robert Brown, Thomas Rainey, Samuel Rainey, Benjamin Rainey, Francis Wylie, Joseph Gaston, Samuel Kelsey, James Adair, Wm. Adair, John McCaw, Wm Lewis, John Martin, John Dennis, Thomas Boggs, David Sadler, G. Jameison, John Barry, William Carson, John Wallace, Henry Ray, James Gill, Thomas Gill, Arthur Gill, John Carroll, John Williamson, Adam Williamson, Samuel Williamson, George Williamson, and James Williamson, all sons of James Williamson, at whose house the British and tories were encamped.

The Story Teller.

THE CASKET OF JEWELS.

Mr. Luke Brandon was a Wall street broker, of moderate business capacity, little education, and of plain manners, partaking of the rustic simplicity of his original employment—he was, in early life, a farmer in one of the western counties of New York. With less talent and more cunning, he might be a very rich man, at short notice; but being brought up in an old fashioned school of morality, he could never learn to dignify swindling by the epithet of smartness, nor consider overreaching his neighbor a "fair business transaction." Hence he plodded along the even tenor of his way, contented with moderate profits, and satisfied with the prospect of becoming independent by slow degrees.

But in an evil hour, during a fortnight's relaxation at the Catskill Mountain House, this steady and respectable gentleman, at the mature age of thirty-five, quite an old bachelor, indeed, fell desperately in love with a dashing girl of twenty, the orphan daughter of a bankrupt ship chandler. Miss Maria Manners was highly educated; that is, she could write short notes on perfumed billet paper, without making any orthographical or grammatical mistakes, had taken three quarters' lessons of a French barber, could work worsted lapdogs and embroider slippers, danced like a sylph, and played on the piano indifferently well. She had visited the Catskills on a matrimonial speculation, and made a dead set at poor Brandon. Of course, with his experience in the ways of women, he fell a ready dupe to the fascinating wiles of Miss Manners. She kept him in an agony of suspense for a week, during every evening of which she waltzed with a young lieutenant of dragoons, who was playing billiards and drinking champagne on a sick leave, until she could hear from a fabulous guardian at Philadelphia, and obtain his consent to a sacrifice of her brilliant prospects—nothing a year and a very suspicious account at a fashionable milliner's.

Mr. Brandon went down to the city, purchased a snug house, furnished it modestly, gave a liberal order on his tailor, and one memorable morning, might have been seen looking very uncomfortable, in a white satin stock and kids, beside a lady elegantly dressed in satin and blonde lace, while a portly clergyman pronounced his sentence in the shape of a marriage benediction.

There was a snug wedding breakfast in the new house, at which were present several eminent apple speculators from Fulton market, two or three bank clerks, and a reporter for a weekly newspaper, who consumed a ruinous amount of sandwiches and bottled ale.

Before the honeymoon was over, the bride began to display some of the less amiable features of her character. She sneered at the situation and simplicity of the establishment, and protested she was unaccustomed to that sort of style. She was perfectly sincere in this, for the defunct ship chandler had lived in a basement and two attic chambers.

By dint of repeated persecutions, she induced her husband to move into a larger house; and finally, after the expiration of many years, we find them established in the upper part of the city, in a splendid mansion, looking out upon a fashionable square, with a little marble boy in front sitting on a brick, and spouting a stream of Croton through a clam shell.

One morning Mr. Brandon came home about eleven o'clock. On entering the front door, he beheld, lounging on a sofa, with the *Courrier des Etats Unis* in his hand, Claude, the handsome French page of Mrs. B.

"Where is Mrs. B?" asked the elderly broker.

"Madame is in her boudoir," replied the page; "but," he added, seeing his master move in that direction, "I do not know whether she is visible."

"That I will ascertain myself, young gentleman," replied the broker, with a slight shade of irony in his tone. "But tell me, is there any one with her?"

"Only M. Auguste Charmant," said the page.

"That confounded Frenchman!" muttered the plebeian broker. "My yankee house is turned topsyturvy by these foreigners. There is a French cook, and a French chambermaid, and the friend of the family is a Frenchman. I don't know what I am eating, and I hardly understand a word that's said at my table. Sometimes, by way of change, they talk Italian instead of French. One might as well associate with a stack of monkeys. Out of the way, jackanapes."

"Monsieur," said the page, with true Gallic dignity, "I was about to proceed to announce monsieur."

"Monsieur can announce himself," replied Brandon, with the grin of a hyena; and proceeding up stairs, he entered the boudoir without knocking.

Mrs. Brandon was lounging on a *fauteuil*, in an elegant morning toilet—literally plunged and embowered in costly Brussels lace. Her delicate, bejeweled fingers were playing with the petals of an exquisite bouquet. Thanks to a good constitution, a life of ease, an accomplished milliner, and an incomparable dentist, the fair Maria, though the mother of a marriageable girl, was still a lovely and fascinating woman, and Brandon, as he gazed on her superb figure, almost forgave her absurd ambition and her ruinous extravagance. Still, when he glanced at his own anxious, emaciated, and careworn features, in the splendid Versailles mirror that hung opposite, his transitory pleasure gave way to stern and bitter feelings. He merely nodded to his wife, and bowed coldly to her companion, a young Frenchman, attired in the height of fashion, with dark eyes and hair, and the most superb mustache imaginable.

"Ah! my dear Meestare Brandon," said the dandy, "give me your hand. I congratulate you on such a *bonne fortune*—such good luck as has befallen you."

"Explain yourself, sir," said the broker.

"*Avec plaisir*. I have secured for you a box at the opera for the whole season—and for only five hundred dollars."

The broker whistled.

"Really nothing," said Mrs. Brandon; "only think—the best troupe we have yet had—a new prima donna and a new basso."

"Fiddlestick!" said the matter of fact husband. "What does it amount to?"

"Brandon," said the lady with a true maternal dignity, "reflect upon the importance of the opera to the education of your daughter."

"Nonsense!" said the broker, angrily. "My daughter Julia would please me much better if she cultivated a little common sense, and adopted the plain, republican manners fitted to the eventualities of her future life, instead of aping foreign fashions, and doing her best to denationalize her character."

Monsieur Auguste Charmant shrugged his shoulders, Mrs. Brandon clasped her hands, and the former rising, said:

"*Au revoir*, madame, *au plaisir*, Monsieur Brandon. I will bid you good morning, and leave you to the pleasures of a conjugal *tête-a-tête*."

Mr. Brandon rose and paced the room to and fro for several minutes after the departure of the Frenchman, narrowly eyed by Mrs. Brandon, who was anticipating a "scene," and preparing to meet it. In these contests the victory generally rested with the lady. The broker finally opened the door, and finding the page with ear glued against the keyhole, quietly took that young gentleman by the lobe of his left ear, and leading him to the head of the staircase, advised him, as a friend, to descend it as speedily as possible, before his gravitation was assisted by the application of an extraneous power. This accomplished, he retured to the boudoir, and locking the door, sat down beside his wife. The latter playfully tapped his cheek with her boquet, but the broker took no notice of the coquettish action, and gloomily contemplating his gaiters, as if afraid to trust his eyes with the siren glances of his partner, commenced:

"Mrs. B., I want to have some serious talk with you."

"You never have any other kind of small talk," retorted the lady. "You have a rare gift of sermonizing."

Mr. Brandon passed over the sneer, and continued:

"You alluded just now to Julia; it is of her I wish to speak. Let me remind you of her future prospects, and ask you whether it be not time to change your system of educating her, and prepare her for a change of life. You will remember, then, that, two years ago, with the consent of all parties, she was engaged to Author Merton, a very promising young dry goods merchant of Boston."

"Only a retail merchant," said Mrs. Brandon.

"A promising young merchant, the son of my old friend Jasper Merton. It was agreed between us that I should bestow ten thousand dollars on my daughter, and Merton an equal sum on his son. In case of the failure of either party to fulfill the engagement, the father of the party was to forfeit to the aggrieved person the sum of ten thousand dollars. This very week, I expect my old friend and his son to ratify the contract. You know with what difficulty, owing to the enormous expenses of our mode of life, I have laid aside the stipulated sum; for in your hands, the hands of the mother of my child, I have lodged this sacred deposit."

"Very true," said the lady, "and it is now in my secretary, under lock and key. But what an odious arrangement! How the contract and the forfeit smell of the shop!"

"Don't despise the smell of the shop, Maria," said the broker, smiling gravely, "it is the smell of the shop, that perfumes the boudoir."

"And then Arthur Merton is such a shocking person," continued the lady; "really, no manners."

"To my mind, Maria," said the broker, "his manners, plain, open, and frank, are infinitely superior to those of the French butterfly who is always fluttering at your elbow."

"And if he is always fluttering at my elbow," retorted the lady, "it is because you are always away."

"That is because I always have business," said the broker. "If we lived in less style, I should have more leisure. Ah! Maria, Marie. I fear that we are driving on too recklessly; the day of reckoning will come—we seem to be sailing prosperously now, but a shipwreck may terminate the voyage."

"Not while I have the helm," said the lady. "Listen to me, Brandon. You know little of the philosophy of life. To command success, we must seem to have obtained it. To be rich, we must seem so. You have done well to follow my advice in one particular. You have taken a very prominent part in the present Presidential canvass. There cannot fail to be a change of administration, and while you have been making yourself conspicuous in public, I have been electioneering for you in private. I have been feasting and petting the men who hold the winning cards in their hands. It is not for mere ostentation that I have invited to my *soirees*, the Hon. Mr. A., Judge B., and Counsellor C."

"I don't see what you're driving at," said the broker.

O, of course not. But when you find yourself a *millionaire*, and all by the scheming of your wife, perhaps, B., you'd think there was some wisdom in what you are pleased to call my fashionable follies. But to make the matter plain—a change of administration occurs—you are the confidential friend of the secretary of the treasury—your talents as a financier are duly recognized—you have the management of the most important loans and contracts—you have four years, perhaps eight, to flourish in, and your fortune is made."

"Ah!" said the broker, doubtfully.

"If such success attends you, and there can be no doubt of it, how painful would be your reflections, if you thought you had sacrificed your daughter's future in an alliance with a petty trader. I have arranged a brighter destiny for her—a marriage with a foreign nobleman."

"I'd rather see her the wife of a Yankee peddler."

"Out upon you!" cried the lady. "I tell you, your opposition will have little weight, Mr. B. Come to my *soiree* this evening, and I will present you to Count Alfred de Roseville, an exile from France for political offences—only think, B., he was the intimate friend of Henry V."

"And who vouches for this paragon."

"Our friend, Auguste."

"*Your* friend, Auguste, you mean."

"I mean M. Charmant, the friend of the family."

"And what does Julia think of this Phœnix?"

"She adores him."

"Alas! how her gentleness of nature must have been perverted! Well, well, Maria, in spite of myself, I cannot resolve to humble your pride, or thwart your schemes. I believe you love me and your daughter. Yet you are playing a desperate game—remember, our all is staked upon the issue."

"And I'll await the hazard of the die," replied Mrs. B., as she kissed her husband fondly, and dismissed him with a wave of the hand.

When Brandon came down into the hall, he was thunder-struck at meeting there three persons, whose appearance, after what had just passed up stairs in the boudoir, might well be considered inopportune. The first was uncle Richard Watkins, a relative of Mr. Brandon's who resided in the country, and had become immensely rich by land speculations, and the others were Mr. Merton and his son. A pile of baggage announced that they were not mere callers.

"Give us your hand, Luke," said uncle Richard, extending his enormous brown palm; "you ain't glad to see me, nor nothin', be you? Brought my trunk, valise, carpet bag, and hat box, and calc'late to spend six weeks here. How's the old woman and gal—pretty smart? Well, that's hearty."

The broker shook the old man by the hand, and then turned to welcome, with the best grace, he could his friend Merton, and his proposed son-in-law.

"You know what *we've* come for," said the elder Merton, with a sly wink.

"Pray walk into the drawing room, said the broker, and 'on hospitable thoughts intent,' he threw wide the door, and the party entered.

Ah! unlucky Brandon! why didst thou not summon the French page to announce thy guests? Thou hadst then been spared a scene that might have figured in a comedy, and came near furnishing material for a tragedy.

An elegant young man was kneeling at the feet of an elegant young lady. The former was Count Alfred de Roseville, the latter Miss Julia Brandon. The count started to his feet, the young lady blushed and shrieked. The count was the first to recover his voice and self-possession. Rushing to the broker, he exclaimed in broken English—

"O, my dear monsieur, how I moost glad to see you—your daughter—Mees Julie—she 'ave say—yais—yais—yais to my ardent love suit—and now I have the honneur to salute her respectable papa."

"O, father," said the terrified girl, "it was with mother's knowledge and consent."

Brandon could not speak a word.

"This lady, sir," said Merton, fiercely, advancing to the count, "is my affianced bride."

"Your bride—ah?" cried the count, "when she has just come to say—yais—to my ardent love suit!"

"What does the gal say? what does the gal say?" asked uncle Richard, interposing.

"Speak, Julia," said her father, sternly, "and weigh well your words. I will not force you to fulfill a contract against your will—the penalty and contingency of such a refusal have been provided for—but pause before you reject the son of my old friend for a foreigner—a man with whom you can have had but a few days' acquaintance."

Julia averted her eyes, and blushed scarlet, but placed her hand in that of the count just as her mother entered the apartment.

"Enough," said young Merton; "I am satisfied. Come, father, let us retire—our presence here is only a burden. O, Julia!" he added in a tone of deep feeling, "little did I expect this at your hands. I have looked forward to this meeting with the fondest hope. It is past—farewell—may you be happy."

"I shall be very happy to see you again—nevar!" said the count.

"O, as to that," said young Merton, approaching him, and addressing him in a low tone, "I think *you*, at least, have not seen the last of me, monsieur. At any rate, you shall hear from me soon."

"I'ave not nozzin to do nor not to say viz *canaille*, said the count.

"Then, perhaps, it will be more agreeable to you, sir, to be horsewhipped in Broadway," said Merton.

"Me! horsewhip! me! the friend of Henry V.! horreur!" cried the count.

"Very good, monsieur, I have presented the alternative. Where may you be found?"

"*Hotel de Ville*—City Hotel."

"*Au plaisir*, then *Count* Alfred de Roseville," said Merton, glancing at the card the Frenchman handed him. "Come, father."

"Mr. Brandon, I shall wait on you at your counting room in the course of the afternoon," said Mr. Merton, senior; "we have an account to settle together."

And the father and son bowed themselves out of the room. Julia was so much agitated at the events which had just transpired, that she was compelled to retire to her room. Uncle Richard and Mr. and Mrs. Brandon remained on the field of battle.

"Well, Maria," said the broker, "the first act of the comedy has been played, in which you have assigned me a very insignificant and low-comedy part, but I don't think either of us has made a very distinguished figure in it. I hope the last act will redeem the first."

The lady reddened, but made no reply.

"Let us foot up the column to see what amount is to be carried forward," continued the broker. "Here's an old friendship dissolved—a worthy young man broken hearted—a suspicious suitor introduced into my family, and ten thousand dollars to be paid on demand. A very pretty morning's work."

"It will come out right," said Mrs. Brandon.

"As the boy remarked when he was gored by the cow's horn," observed uncle Richard, philosophically, as he extended his length upon an ottoman, including his boots, in the enjoyment of the comfort of cut velvet.

"I leave uncle Richard to your care, madam," said the broker, "while I go down in town to ascertain the value of my new son-in-law's paper upon 'change.

On an evening not long after the above scenes, the broker's house was brilliantly lighted up from basement to attic. Through the open hall door, at the head of the flight of marble steps, servants in livery were seen receiving the shawls and hats of the guests, as carriage after carriage deposited its brilliant contents at the house of the financier. Mingled with the black coats of the gentlemen, and the gossamer attire of the ladies, were seen the brilliant uniforms of officers of the army and navy. The crowd poured into the magnificent ball room, where, flanked by her husband, and by the indefatigable Monsieur Charmant, the lovely hostess received her guests with an elegance of manner truly aristocratic. The delicious waltzes of Strauss, performed by a German band, floated through the magnificent rooms. Glistening chandeliers poured down a flood of soft light on the fair faces and the polished ivory shoulders of the ladies. It was a scene of enchantment, and Mrs. Brandon revelled in the splendor that surrounded her and the incense that was offered. She was pleased at the distinguished appearance of her husband, pleased to see her daughter hanging on the arm of the French count, pleased at every thing but one. One object alone, like the black mask at the bridal of Hernani, marred the festivity, and created a discord in the midst of the harmony—that was uncle Richard walking up and down the ball room in a meal-colored coat and cowhide boots.

Various efforts were made to get possession of uncle Richard and lead him away into captivity. A whist table was suggested in an anteroom, an Havana was proposed in the library, but he "didn't want to play cards, and he had just, quit smoking," and so he paraded his coat and boots before the company, the "observed of all observers."

Mrs. B. made the best of it, whispering confidentially that he was a distant connection, immensely rich, partially insane, but perfectly harmless. O, how dazzling was Mrs. Brandon that evening, in the beauty of her person and of her attire! She wore diamonds that were valued at ten thousand dollars.

In the midst of the brilliant festivities, Mr. Brandon was suddenly summoned from the ball room. He presently returned, looking very pale, and beckoned his wife, who followed him into the library. Mr. Merton, senior, was there, with a very stern expression on his countenance.

"What's the matter?" asked Mrs. Brandon.

"The matter," said her husband, "is simply this—Mr. Merton leaves town to-night for Philadelphia, on special business, and having occasion for a large sum of money, requires the immediate payment of the ten thousand dollars which are due him for our violation of the marriage contract."

"Yes, madam," said Mr. Merton, "and I called on your husband for it, and he referred me to you as having the deposit in your possession."

"Wouldn't to-morrow do as well?" asked the lady, anxiously.

"No, madam, my necessity is urgent."

"Go, Maria," said the broker, "and bring the money instantly. A debt like this admits of no postponement."

"Alas! alas!" stammered the poor woman, "I have not this money by me. Surely, Mr. Brandon, you must be able to command it."

"Not one dollar, madam," said the broker. "I would have spared you this explanation to-night, but you have brought it on yourself. This is our last night of fictitious splendor—my affairs are in inextricable confusion—losses have this day come to light which complete my ruin—and to-morrow the world will know me as a bankrupt."

Mrs. Brandon wrung her hands and sobbed bitterly.

"But that is a grief for to-morrow," said the broker, sternly. "There is music and dancing, champagne and flowers, in the next room—enough glory for to-night. But this business of Mr. Merton's requires instant attention. What have you done with the ten thousand dollars? Have you dared to squander it?"

"No, no," said Mrs. Brandon, earnestly. "I am not so bad as that. I deposited it with Sandford, the jeweller, of whom I hired the casket of jewels to deck myself to-night."

"Mr. Merton," said the broker, calmly, "I shall have to trouble your patience a little while longer. I will write instantly to Mr. Sandford, late as it is, and bid him bring the money here at once."

After dispatching the note, Brandon and his wife returned to the ball room. O, how insipid to the lady's ear seemed now the babble of her guests! The flowers had lost their perfume—the music its divine influence. Yet, with the serpent of remorse and anguish gnawing at her heart, she was forced to smile and seem happy and at ease. A half hour passed in this way seemed an age of torture; and when the messenger despatched by her husband had returned and summoned them again to the library, it gave her inexpressible relief.

"O, Mr. Sandford!" she exclaimed to the jeweller, who was now added to the party, "how happy I am to see you! There is your casket—and here are your diamonds!" and she tore the jewels from her neck, ears, and wrists, and offered them to the jeweller.

"Madam," said the jeweller, gravely, after having examined the gems, "these are not the articles I furnished you. I lent you a set of diamonds—these are paste!"

"What is the meaning of this?" asked the broker, sternly.

"I know not. I cannot explain. O, Luke! Luke! I am innocent!" and Mrs. Brandon sunk fainting into a chair.

When she had recovered her senses, Mr. Brandon asked—

"Did you make this arrangement in person?"

"No," she replied; "it was through the mediation of Mr. Charmant."

"Let's send for him," said Merton.

"Stay," said the broker; "an idea has occurred to me. I have observed at times that this Monsieur Charmant had a good deal to say to your French page, my good lady.

"It was he that recommended Claude," said Mrs. Brandon.

"Then we will have Claude before us," said the broker. Claude soon made his appearance.

"Claude," said Mrs. Brandon, "do you know anything about this casket of jewels?"

The boy changed color, but shook his head.

"Now, my Christian friend," said the broker, "you need not tell us what you know about the jewels, if you are unwilling; but in case of your refusal, I shall send for a police officer, who will, undoubtedly, drum the whole affair out of you."

The threat had the desired effect. The boy confessed that Charmant and De Roseville were impostors—that they were not even Frenchmen; but a brace of London thieves, who had picked up a knowledge of French during a professional tour on the continent, and who had emigrated to America for the purpose introducing their art among our unsophisticated countrymen. Charmant had been a jeweller, and this enabled him to counterfeit the gems obtained of Mr. Sanford, which he purposed disposing of at the first favorable opportunity. The boy believed that Charmant had them about him at that moment. In England, Charmant was known as French Jack, and Roseville as Rusty Joe.

"Go back to the ball room," said Mr. Merton to Brandon, "and take your wife with you. Mr. Sandford, you stay by the boy. I'll go for an officer." Brandon and his lady returned to the ball room, the latter somewhat relieved, but mortified at the deceptions which had been practiced on her.

In a few minutes a burly member of the police, with a very thick stick, and a very red handkerchief knotted around his neck, made his appearance, to the astonishment of the guests, amid whom the host and hostess alone testified no excitement or alarm.

"Sarvant, ladies and gentlemen, sarvant," said the functionary, scraping his right boot, and plucking desperately at the brim of his hat. "Don't let me interrupt yer innercent amusement—sorry to intrude, as the bull said when he rushed into the china shop—but business before pleasure—now then, my hearty! how are you?"

The last words were accompanied by a vigorous blow on the shoulder of M. Auguste Charmant, who was at that moment paying his attentions to a belle from Union Square.

"*Monsieur me parte-t-il?*" exclaimed the dandy, with well feigned astonishment.

"O, nix the lingo, French Jack," said the officer, "or leastways patter Romany so's a cove can understand you. Fork over them are diamonds—or else it will go harder with you. The boy's peached, and the game's up; you were spotted long ago."

With a smothered curse, French Jack dived his hand into his vest pocket and produced the stolen jewels. While this was enacting, the count had been quietly stealing to the door, but the vigilant officer had an eye upon his movements, and a hand upon his shoulder before he could escape.

"Now I've got the pair of you," said the worthy man, chuckling apoplectically in the folds of his red handkerchief. "Now, don't ride, rusty Joe—for there's a small few of us outside with amazin' thick sticks, that might fall on your head and hurt you, if so be you happened to be rambustical."

"Curse the luck!" muttered the thief, as with his companion he marched off.

It may well be imagined that the scene dispersed the party in a hurry. They took French leave, like birds scattered by a sudden storm. Julia was carried to bed in hysterics, accompanied by her mother. Merton and the jeweller had disappeared, the three rogues had been taken into custody, and only Brandon and uncle Richard

——"trod alone
The banquet hall deserted."

"Well, uncle," said the broker, bitterly, "the game's up. I have been ruined, stock and fluke, by letting my wife have her own way, and to-morrow I shall be a bankrupt."

"No you won't," said uncle Richard.

"Yes I shall," said the broker, angrily. "And Julia, abandoned by her lover, will be broken-hearted."

"No she won't," said uncle Richard.

"Who's to prevent it?" asked the broker.

"Uncle Richard," replied that personage. "What's the use of a friend, unless he's a friend in need. I've got plenty of money and neither chick nor child in the world. I'll meet your liabilities with cash. Young Merton loves Julia in spite of her temporary alienation—he will gladly take her back. The rogues will get their deserts. Your wife, sick and ashamed of her fashionable follies, will gladly gin' up this house and the servants. You'll buy a little country seat on the Hudson, and I'll come and live with you."

As every thing turned out exactly as uncle Richard promised and predicted, we have no occasion to enlarge on the fortunate subsiding of this "sea of troubles."

☞ There are two men who should be very happy. The one who has a wife contented to remain at home—the other, whose wife runs away with another man and remains away.